THE CONTRAST;

OR, THE HISTORY OF JAMES and THOMAS,

A TALE.

Written for the Use of Sunday Schools.

The SECOND EDITION.

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BRITISH MUSEUM

THE

CONTRAST, &c.

JAMES SAGELY, a lad of thirteen years old, was returning, one lovely Summer's evening, about ſeven o'clock, from the Sunday School of the pariſh of Welford, when paſſing through a number of ragged children, who were playing at marbles, he ſaw one boy ſitting on a mound of dirt, crying moſt grievouſly, and rubbing his leg, which was bleeding. James immediately ſtopped, and enquired what was the matter. "Why," ſaid the child, "Bob Heady did it; I won of him, and for all that, he ſnatched at my halfpenny, and becauſe I wouldn't let it go, he gave me a kick, and down I fell, and cut my leg; and there he has got away my halfpenny and my marbles and all: I wiſh I was bigger, and I'd beat him, that's what I would."—"Oh, for ſhame Tom!"

ſaid James Sagely, "that would be very bad; he did wrong to take away your things; but it would be very wrong to beat him, if you were the ſtrongeſt—it would be revenge, and that's very naughty."—— "Naughty, indeed!" cried Tom, "to beat a boy that uſes one ill; I am ſure you would beat a boy that ſtole away your book there from under your arm."— "I hope not," returned James, "though I ſhould be ſorry to loſe the book, which Mrs. Childlove juſt now gave me, for a reward at ſchool: if you would but go to ſchool and to church of a Sunday, you would learn how wrong it is to quarrel; and if you had been there this evening, you know your leg would not have been cut."—"May be not," ſaid Tom.— "Certainly not," replied James; "and I wiſh you would, inſtead of playing at marbles."—"But I like to play at marbles," interrupted Tom, "and I don't like to go to ſchool."—"Indeed Tom," ſaid James, "if you would but go, you would find it pleaſanter than you think: here you play, and get into quarrels,

and

and cry and are vexed, and if you went to ſchool, beſides learning a great deal, you would ſit comfortable and feel happy, and be taken notice of by your betters—do go."—"Not I, indeed," ſaid Tom; "you think yourſelf mighty wiſe, becauſe you have a good coat on your back: if Madam would give me one, I'd go faſt enough; but you are a vaſt favourite, nobody knows why."—"Indeed, Tom," ſaid James very gravely, "I am no more a favourite than you would be, if you went and took pains: learning, our maſter tells us, will raiſe us up friends, and if you try for friends you will find them."—"Well, I tell you, you are vaſtly wiſe to be ſure," ſaid Tom with a ſneer.—"I wiſh I was," anſwered James, "and I wiſh you was wiſe enough not to be croſs with me, for wiſhing you to go to ſchool: will it do *me* any good for *you* to go? Now, do anſwer me."—"No," ſaid Tom, "I can't ſay it will; nor me neither, for that matter: beſides, I won't go. I tell you I love playing at marbles: and then I'm aſhamed of going

in all my rags."—"If that's all, ſaid James, "I can tell you that is no objection; they ſay at ſchool that being poor is no ſhame: the viſitors talk quite as much to ragged children, if they are clean, as they do to tidy ones."—"Viſitors! what's that?" aſked Tom.—"Why, Ladies and Gentlemen who come and teach us," anſwered James.—"I ſhould like well enough," ſaid Tom, "to learn of fine folks, only I ſhould be aſhamed."—"So thought I once," ſaid James; "but why ſhould one? If they are kind and will take the trouble of teaching, I think it a pleaſure to learn."—"But what's the uſe of learning? It's a deal of fuſs for nothing," anſwered Tom.—"No, not for nothing," ſaid James; "for if one learns to read, one may know all about God and one's duty, and underſtand what is ſaid at church."—"That's no hard matter, ſure!" ſaid Tom, laughing; "isn't it all plain Engliſh?"—"True, anſwered James; "but I am ſure that, till I went to the Sunday School, and heard ſo much of how it's one's duty to liſten all one

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can, I never knew half what the parſon ſaid."—"And now, I ſuppoſe," cried Tom, laughing ſtill louder, "you are grown ſo monſtrous wiſe, that you know as much as the Parſon and Clerk put together. I wouldn't be ſo wiſe as ſome folks for a great deal, that's what I wouldn't."—"You may make a joke of me as long as you pleaſe," ſaid James; "but I aſſure you I am very thankful to thoſe who have taught me what I do know, and I wiſh you were as happy as I am. Good night to you; one good I have done: you was crying when firſt I ſaw you, and you are laughing now; if it is at me, much good may it do you; but I have moſt reaſon for laughing: for, as they ſay, let thoſe laugh who win. I have won a book by learning to read, and you have loſt your halfpenny by playing at marbles of a Sunday. Good night, Tom, and don't be croſs with me for telling you the truth."—And away he ran merrily home, where, after ſhewing his book to his father and mother, and comforting them who did not know how to read (for

Sunday Schools were not eſtabliſhed in their youth) by reading two chapters in the Bible aloud, he ate his ſupper, ſaid his prayers, and went to bed and to ſleep with an eaſy conſcience and a happy heart.—Tom Lounger, on the contrary, loitered on the common till it was quite dark: in his way home he met Bob Heady, who quarrelled with him again, and beat him, for ſome abuſive language he gave him, on account of the halfpenny; and when he came home, got anger from his parents for not coming back earlier, and was ſent ſupperleſs and crying to bed. After he was there, he could not help reflecting on what James Sagely had ſaid, and thought that, to be ſure, it could be no intereſt of his to invite him to go to School, and that it would perhaps be wiſer and better to go; but his envy of his decent coat and good temper, ſoon overcame theſe good thoughts, and he ſtrengthened himſelf in the bad reſolutions he had formed, of laughing at James whenever he ſaw him, and making a mockery of him among his idle companions.

The

The following Sunday accordingly, with half a dozen boys as good for nothing as himſelf, Tom Lounger followed James Sagely down the lane, laughing and hallowing, "There goes the wiſe one."—James took no notice of their behaviour, but walked compoſedly along, till Tom, who was enraged at his calmneſs, picking up ſome dirt to throw at him, he turned round, and looking very ſtern, but not paſſionate, ſaid, "I don't want to quarrel with any of ye, and I am not eaſily provoked; but take notice, that if any one of ye ſtrike, or throw any thing at me, I am not at all afraid to fight, though I don't wiſh to do it."—His reſolute voice and manner made them every one aſhamed, and as idle people are almoſt always cowards, away they ſneaked one after another, and left him to purſue his way. He was, as uſual, commended by his ſchoolmaſter; he attended at church, with proper reſpect to the excellent ſermon which Mr. Allright preached, and ſpent as happy a day as his enemy did an unhappy one.

James

James Sagely did not, however, feel comfortable with the idea, that however unjuſt Tom Lounger's hatred was, yet he certainly did hate him; and he determined upon the firſt opportunity to try to ſhew him, that whatever were his feelings he was his friend: for he well knew, that God will not *forgive us our treſpaſſes*, unleſs *we forgive thoſe who treſpaſs againſt us*; and he thought he could not do his duty better towards God and his neighbour, than by forgiving this boy's ill nature, and endeavouring to do him the great ſervice of bringing him to the Sunday School, where he would have the chance at leaſt of growing good and wiſe.

It happened at harveſt time, that both theſe boys were engaged to the ſame farmer, and Tom was for ever trying to ſay or do ſome ſpiteful thing by James, of which he took as little notice as poſſible, but gained very little ground in his ſcheme of becoming Tom's friend; becauſe whenever he attempted to ſpeak to him, he was always checked by the other's taunting

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way of calling him "Sir," or ſaying, "Oh! pray liſten to my wiſe maſter."

One day, when they left off for dinner, Tom, who had very careleſsly loſt what had been given him to bring into the field, being very croſs and diſcontented, James ſaid, he was very welcome to half of his, if he pleaſed.—"What's half?" ſaid Tom, "I am very hungry, and I won't thank you, unleſs you'll give me all."—"That I will, with all my heart," ſaid James, "if you will promiſe me not to be ſo ill tempered with me, who never did you any harm."—"You won't be ſuch a fool, ſure," ſaid Tom, "as to give away your dinner."—"I don't think it being a fool," returned James; "only remember you are not to be croſs any more to-day."—Tom caught it haſtily from him, and began eating in a great hurry, till, ſeeing James ſit quiet and ſilent, he ſaid, "What! you are not hungry, I ſuppoſe."—"Yes, I am," ſaid James; "but you are welcome, for all that."—"No, no," ſaid the other, "take half."—"I won't, indeed,"

indeed," returned James; "I gave it freely; I ſhan't die becauſe I go without my dinner one day."—"No more ſhould I, I ſuppoſe; but I am ſure I would not give you mine," cried Tom.—"May be not," anſwered James; "then I ſhould not be obliged to you, you know."—"I don't want to be obliged to you neither," ſaid Tom.—"That's as you will," ſaid James, "I don't want to be thanked; but I meant to oblige you, and as you have eat up the dinner, there's an end of the matter."—"No; but there is not," ſaid Tom, burſting out a-crying, "you are a good-natured fellow, and I have uſed you very ill many a time, and now to have eat away your dinner from you—I'll ſtarve another time, before I do ſuch a thing again."—"I'm quite content," ſaid James, "and if you will be good friends with me, I want nothing more."—Tom readily agreed to it, and as they went home at night, would fain have perſuaded James to ſtay upon the heath and play at trap-ball with him and ſome more; but he ſaid he muſt go ſtraight home, as

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he always read to his parents, or looked at his taſks, before he went to bed, and he ſhould not be happy not to do it.

The two boys went on for ſome days, without Tom's being ſo croſs as he had uſed to be; but without much real regard on either ſide: for Tom, who was conſcious of his ignorance, could not help envying James's ſuperior knowledge; and James, on the other hand, could feel no great ſatisfaction in the company of a boy whoſe whole converſation was made up of fooliſhneſs and bad words.

Every evening Tom Lounger propoſed to James to ſtay and play after his work, and every evening James refuſed the invitation.—One day Tom could not help expreſſing his ſurpriſe, that a boy like him had no pleaſure in play, but was as grave and ſolid as a man.—"That is a great miſtake," ſaid James, "I love play quite as well as you do, Tom."—"That you dont," ſaid Tom, "or you would ſtay to-night, when we ſhall have ſo many to help."—"That's the very

very reaſon why I ſhall not," returned James; "I don't like your company."—"Not like my company, truly! Pray, what's the matter with them?" aſked Tom.—"Why, they are not what my maſter calls good boys," anſwered James; "and he ſays, if I keep ſuch company I ſhall come to a bad end. You know, Tom, they all ſwear, every one of them, and that your playing is all gaming for money, and gaming, you know, leads to the gallows."—"I know no ſuch thing," interrupted Tom; "it leads to the ginger-bread ſhop, if you pleaſe: when I win, away I go and buy ginger-bread; ſo you ſee you are miſtaken."—"I don't think I am," ſaid James; "when you loſe, what do you do?"—"Oh! I ſeldom loſe," cried Tom.—"Well, what did Bob Heady do t'other day, when he loſt?" aſked James.—"Why, he took away my halfpenny, he did," anſwered Tom, "I have not forgot it yet."—"Well," ſaid James, "who knows but you might have done the ſame, if Jack Feeble had won of you? I obſerve you ſeldom,

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any of ye, allow that he has won; but don't you think, that if Bob would take away your halfpenny becauſe he was ſtrongeſt, he would take away the Squire's guinea, if he could, and what would happen then?" —"Why, then he would be carried before the Juſtice, as Betty Sly was, when ſhe ſtole the ſpoon from the alehouſe," anſwered Tom.—"Yes," added James, "and hanged as ſhe was, at the next aſſizes: but that is not the worſt neither. What d'ye think becomes of people that are hanged, after they are dead? Oh! Tom, Tom, it makes one ſad to think what becomes of them; ſure you know that they go to the devil, and are puniſhed for ever—then don't think of gaming, when it leads to ſuch bad ends: if Bob Heady had not gamed, he would not have robbed you for the ſake of buying ſome ginger-bread, and, take my word for it, you will be tempted to do as bad, if you don't keep out of ſuch company."—"But what can I do?" ſaid Tom; "we leave work too ſoon to go home, and I don't know what to do with myſelf."—

"Oh!

"Oh! for ſhame, don't ſay that," cried James; "can't you play with your little brothers, if you muſt play? But I ſhould think it better to help my father dig the bit of garden, than to ſtay idling on the heath." "My father don't want his ground dug; beſides, I don't want to work after having been working all day, thank ye," ſaid Tom."—"I could tell you another thing then," ſaid James; "you might learn to read."—"And how am I to learn by myſelf, I wonder!" cried Tom.—"I was going," continued James, "to ſay, that if you really only ſtay with idle company for want of ſomething to do, if you will come with me, I will ſhew you what I can in my books; that is, if you like it, not elſe."—"Well," ſaid Tom, "juſt for fun, I will go with you ſome time or other."

It was long before Tom Lounger found a fit opportunity to learn; and when the harveſt was at an end, and they no longer worked together, theſe boys very ſeldom met; for their diſpoſitions were much

too

too different for either to ſeek the other's company; but if they happened at any time to come together, James Sagely was ready to ſerve Thomas Lounger, becauſe it was his temper to be kind to all his fellow creatures; and Tom, though his envy prevented his liking, could not help feeling a ſort of eſteem and confidence in James's goodneſs, which the very worſt of people are unable to withhold from the virtuous.

One Sunday night, in the autumn, they chanced to meet again, as James Sagely was returning from ſchool, and the other was loitering about, not knowing what to do with himſelf. James ſhook him by the hand, and told him, he was ſorry to ſee him look as he did; for he was ſhabby, ſickly, and ſad in his appearance.——"Why, I am not ſo ſpruce as you, to be ſure," ſaid Tom; "I havn't ſuch friends. What, did Madam give you that hat?"—"No, indeed," anſwered James, with an honeſt pride; "I bought it myſelf; I have laid up all I got in the ſummer, and father bought this hat out of it, and I have

a good bit of money left."—Tom bluſhed: he felt he had earned as much as James; but it was gone he did not know how: gaming and ginger-bread took it all away; he was ragged, he was unhappy, and it was all his own fault. James ſaw his confuſion, and kindly taking him by the hand, "Come," ſaid he, "we haven't ſeen one another a long time, come along home with me, and mother will make you welcome."—Tom followed him ſlowly along, and never ſpoke a word when he got to Dame Sagely's houſe, who was very kind to him, and gave him plenty of bread and cheeſe, which he ate very heartily, being pretty ſparingly fed at home, where his parents, who were famous for idleneſs, never had any thing comfortable for themſelves or their children. Mrs. Sagely's cottage, on the contrary, was as neat as herſelf, and that is ſaying a great deal; for there was not a cleaner woman in the pariſh, and ſhe took a pride in ſeeing her huſband and children clean and in tight clothes: her hearth was always red, her table

rubbed as bright as a looking glaſs, and her little cottage, in every part of it, as comfortable, and much cleaner than many a fine houſe. Tom could not help wiſhing, as he looked round him, that he was as well off as James, and hung his head down with ſhame, when the good woman aſked him how long he had belonged to the Sunday School. On his owning that he had never been there at all, ſhe expreſſed her ſurpriſe, by ſaying, "Well! to be ſure I thought you was Jemmy's ſchool-fellow, by his bringing you in along with him. Why, you are of our pariſh, and I am ſure you might go if you would."—Tom ſaid nothing; and James, looking kindly at him, ſaid, "Do, mother, tell him he ought to go; for he won't believe me."—"I am ſure, ſaid Mrs. Sagely, he ought to believe you, Jemmy; for much good have you got there, and done to your poor father and me too, by reading to us and making us happy; good friends too are to be got by going to ſchool, and behaving well there. I am ſure neighbour Thornton's

girl never would have got ſo good a place, if it hadn't been that the ſchool-miſtreſs knew her, and ſo got her to Farmer Rakeſtraw's, where ſhe lives as happy as the day is long—do go, Tom."—"I am aſhamed to go," anſwered he.—"Never be aſhamed, Tom," ſaid Dame Sagely, "never be aſhamed of doing what is right. Why, old as I am, I ſhould be glad to go, if I had time, and could leave my little ones: very glad to go, and learn to read my duty; but my dear boy here reads it to me of a night, and makes his father's old heart and mine glad; and I do think if you would learn to read, you might comfort your mother, and your father would be ſhamed from ſpending all his time and his money at the alehouſe, (as we know he does) when he could be comfortable at home."

Richard Sagely now came in, and joined with his wife and ſon in giving good advice to Tom Lounger, who, though he was convinced they were right, ſtill kept ſaying, "he was aſhamed, he was aſhamed;" and at laſt went away, promiſing to call again before

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the next Sunday, which, however, he did not do. Sunday after Sunday paſſed away, and he never called on James, who was going on ſurpriſingly in his learning, and not only improved himſelf, but took pains with his brother and ſiſters: he taught them to ſpell words of one ſyllable, and to ſay the Lord's Prayer and the Ten Commandments, before he carried them with him to ſchool, where they were received with great kindneſs, and where James was praiſed for his care.

Meanwhile the boys were growing up towards men, and James, who was near eighteen, was in conſtant work with a farmer, who approved of his ſtill attending the ſchool conſtantly, and who adviſed him to mind his ſchool-maſter, and to lay up what money he could againſt a rainy day. James accordingly made it a rule to lay by ſome of his wages every week, which his mother kept in a drawer for him; and by this means he had ſaved up a pretty little ſum, when a misfortune happened which made him rejoice

he had been ſo careful. His brother and his two ſiſters, who were now beginning to be of ſome uſe and a great comfort to their mother, caught a putrid fever of one another, and all died in the courſe of one month. The expences of the burials, and of the apothecary, were ſeverely felt by Richard Sagely, who, in addition to theſe diſtreſſes, caught a bad ague, by working late and early to maintain his family, and ſitting up at night to help nurſe the poor babies: he was at laſt ſo bad as to be forced to be off his work, and terribly did he grieve with the fear of being obliged to come to the pariſh at laſt; he who had always kept himſelf and his family above want. But theſe were the low-ſpirited notions of a ſick man. His ſon's money was ſtill untouched, and earneſtly did he beg his mother to uſe it, which ſhe refuſed, ſaying, his father had ſtill a little left; and though it rejoiced both their hearts to ſee him ſo dutiful, what he had ſaved was ſure his own, and they would ſpend their laſt farthing, and be half ſtarved, before they would

would conſent to ſpend his honeſt earnings; but their diſtreſſes increaſing with Richard Sagely's increaſing illneſs, Mrs. Sagely was forced, with an aching heart for the loſs of her dear children, and for the miſery which threatened her, to accept of her worthy ſon's offer.

At this time Tom Lounger, who had got into the Squire's ſtables, was (being clever about the horſes) lately taken into the family, and put into livery, of which he was very proud. He now called upon James, for the purpoſe of ſhewing his finery, and finding him ſad, owing to his father's illneſs, and the ſorrow of his mother, "I wiſh," ſaid he, "you were one of us; for ſee here, I have plenty of money; nothing like ſervice!" and he pulled out ſeveral ſhillings and half-crowns. "If *my* father was ſick, I ſhould not be in ſuch diſtreſs, you ſee."—"I am glad to ſee you ſo rich," ſaid James; "I hope 'tis a ſign you are more careful."—"Careful, my boy!" replied Tom, "no, there's no need of that," added he, with

an oath: "there are you, ſcraping and ſcraping, ſaving a few trumpery halfpence; my maſter gives me good wages and good victuals and drink, and I envy no ploughboys, not I."—"I wiſh you joy then of your good luck," returned James, "and your mother will, I am ſure, be glad; I hear ſhe's but poorly."—"Is ſhe?" ſaid Tom; "I haven't had time to call."—"Why, you live within a mile," ſaid James. "Aye, that's true," replied Tom; "but you can't know, my lad, what a deal I have to do—Well, good night, I ſhall be glad to ſee you at our houſe. Come, Jemmy, come, and ſee how *we* live; that's life, my boy!" and away he went ſinging, as wild and as careleſs as a bird.

"Ah! James," ſaid Dame Sagely, "the luck of ſome folks—you, my dear boy, with all your goodneſs, are not half ſo happy as Tom yonder, who never was good for much, and will let his mother die for want, before he'll give her that ſilver he is ſo proud of; I wiſh, Jemmy, you were in his place."—

"I don't

"I don't wiſh it, mother," ſaid James; "I am ſure, Farmer Thompſon is a very good maſter, and I deſire no other; beſides, to tell you a ſecret, though Tom may have good wages, I don't believe he is ſo rich as you think: I know they are all gameſters at the Squire's. I heard the footman ſay yeſterday to Tom, going down the lane,—Mind you owe me ſixpence;—ſo, mother, if he is in debt, he is not the richer, you know, for all this jingling in his pocket: but, at all events, were he to be as rich as his maſter, I hope I ſhould not envy him; for envy would only make me unhappy."—"True, my good James," ſaid his poor mother, "we are not to *covet our neighbour's goods, nor any thing that is his*, as the commandment ſays; but it is hard not to wiſh at leaſt to be as happy as they, particularly for ſuch a poor diſtreſſed woman as me."—"Come, come, mother, hope the beſt; times may mend," ſaid her ſon; "and believe me we are happier than Tom, though you don't think ſo. Do you now think him happier

under

under his fine gay coat, than I am under my ſmock frock? Not a bit. Come, dear mother, don't cry, but make ſome warm gruel for father; I'll take it to him; and if he is pure, and can liſten, I'll read, and we'll be comfortable, and you ſhan't think of the worſt."

James's father recovered; but not till they had been forced to ſpend the greateſt part of his ſavings, at which his mother grieved, and took on ſadly; but both ſhe and Richard Sagely bleſſed their ſon for his duty, and he told them truly, the money had made him much happier than if it had been ſpent upon himſelf. Richard Sagely got out to work again, and this worthy little family was once more a pattern of content and happineſs.

Poor Dame Lounger was in a deep conſumption, her huſband had killed himſelf with drink, and ſhe was upon the pariſh, which, though it allowed her what might have done, had ſhe been induſtrious, hardly kept her from ſtarving; whilſt her ſon, who

was

was a favourite with the Squire's eldeſt ſon, becauſe he rode boldly and well, was the gayeſt young fellow in the pariſh. He now went conſtantly to church every Sunday, to ſhew the neatneſs of his dreſs, not to attend to what might have improved him: he wore great buckles, had a variety of waiſtcoats, and though he did not powder his hair, becauſe it is not the faſhion among grooms, he told every body that he was ſoon to be the young Squire's own man, and then he ſhould powder as well as the reſt. This was unfortunately too great a lie for even his former companions to believe: it was known that Tom was but ſeventeen, could neither read nor write, beſides being wanting in ſeveral things requiſite for an upper ſervant; ſo that no one believed him when he was in his boaſting humours, and he only got laughed at for his folly, by thoſe who he fancied were admiring him. Tom's ignorance was, indeed, the occaſion of all his faults; he had not naturally a very bad heart, as may be ſeen from his ſhame, when, as a child, he grieved

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at having eaten the dinner of his generous friend; but never having been taught to know right from wrong, he was continually falling into errors, which his falſe pride prevented him from amending by ſincere repentance: he was aſhamed of owning that he knew nothing, or of ſeeking inſtruction, and by this means continued the poor ignorant being which his own heart told him that he was. Tom was, in conſequence of his ignorance, a great liar; for although *a lie is a foul blot in a man, yet it is continually in the mouth of the untaught*, (Eccleſiaſticus, ch. xx. ver. 29.) —Another ſure conſequence of ignorance, he was idle and proud, and preferred ſervice in a gentleman's family, where, though there is much to be done at times, there are many idle hours, which a young man may waſte in an alehouſe, and ruin himſelf for ever, by the converſation and company which he meets with there. Tom Lounger's miſtaken pride was indulged by his being finer in his dreſs than his neighbours, who were, he fancied, much beneath him in dignity,

becauſe they had not frills to their ſhirts, nor ſo gay a coat on their backs. A very little knowledge would have taught him, that the condition of a labouring man, has, by the wiſeſt people in the world, been always conſidered as the moſt noble, becauſe the moſt uſeful of profeſſions; and that an honeſt day labourer who is his own maſter, and not ſubjected to the whim and caprice of another, but who earns enough to keep himſelf and his family above want, is a more reſpectable, and a much higher character, than that of the firſt ſervant in the firſt nobleman's family in the kingdom.

It is not meant by this, that the whole claſs of ſervants in general are bad and idle, far from it; there are many worthy characters among them; but it will nevertheleſs be commonly obſerved, that thoſe lads in a country village, who prefer going out in the world, as it is called, to remaining quiet in their ſtation, are idle, ill diſpoſed youths, who ſeldom turn out well: though ſome may reform in their old age, or by fall-

ing

ing into good families, get that improvement which they neglected in their childhood. All this James Sagely knew; but did not therefore deſpiſe Tom Lounger, though moſt aſſuredly he did not envy him.

For better than two years they went on in this manner; James working hard, and aſſiſting his parents with his earnings; Tom running in debt, ſpending more than he had, yet as thoughtleſs and as happy as it was poſſible to be; when one evening, as James was coming home from his work, he met Thomas Lounger's mother all in tears, who begged him to come to her houſe (or rather room, for the pariſh had put her into a houſe with more poor, and a moſt uncomfortable way ſhe was in) "for there's Tom," ſaid ſhe, "in great diſtreſs, and wants to ſee you; fine work he has made of it! he has loſt his place, and what am I to do with him? God knows, I don't keep myſelf; and where he is to lay his head, the Lord knows."—"Well, well, dame, don't cry," ſaid James; "I'll juſt ſtep home to my mother, and

tell

tell her not to wait ſupper for me, and I'll come to your ſon."—" Do come," ſaid Dame Lounger; " Tom cries, and ſays, nobody can help him but Jem Sagely."—Ah! thought James, he had forgot me till now he is in diſtreſs; poor fellow! I am ſorry for him; but I thought what it would come to.

When James came to poor Mary Lounger's habitation, he found, in a ſmall diſmal room which contained two beds, an old woman, a cripple with the rheumatiſm; a young one, a widow, who was nurſing two children, twins, of a month old; Mary Lounger, and her ſon, who was ſitting ſulky on the ſide of one of the beds, his mother reproaching him in the following manner with his ill uſage of her:—" You never came near me, Tom, you know you didn't, all the while you was a fine gentleman at the Squire's; I might ſtarve then, who cared? And now that you are turned out of doors, for none of your good deeds I warrant, here you come for me to keep you, indeed! How am I to keep a fine gentleman, pray,

here

here in this place, where we are five of us already, God help us!"

In this manner ſhe would probably have gone on for ſome time, if James Sagely had not entered the room, and ſaid, "Come, don't you ſay any thing to him *now*, dame. I am ſorry for your misfortune, Tom; how did all this happen?"—Tom Lounger, offended inſtead of ſoftened by his mother's rebukes, made no anſwer to James, and turned from him, inſtead of taking the hand he offered.—"Why, Tom, I thought you wiſhed to ſpeak to me," ſaid James.—"So I did," replied he; "but let us get out of this place firſt. Will you go to the King's Head with me?"—"No, I won't," ſaid James; "you know I never will go there with you—if that was all you wanted, good-night."—"No, no, it was not," ſaid Tom, ſtarting up; "but come out of this houſe at leaſt."—James followed him out; and Tom was no ſooner out at the door than he caught hold of his hand, and burſting into tears, ſaid, "I am quite

ruined

ruined and undone."—"I hope not," returned James, "you have loſt a good place, 'tis true; but there are ſtill more to be had: beſides, haven't you your two hands, man. I think they may keep you from being undone too."—"'Tis not the place; I don't care for that," ſaid Tom.—"Well what then?" enquired James; "and how did all this happen? I ſaw you go by our houſe in good ſpirits yeſterday, and here to-night?"—"Aye, it was that going by your houſe that did it all," ſaid Tom, interrupting him; "I was going to Stonebridge revel to meet ſome friends; ſo I thought my maſter wouldn't want bay Smiler, and would know nothing of it, ſo I went upon him; but as bad luck would have it, I was kept later than I intended, ſo I hurried home: I might, perhaps, have a little liquor in my head; but it was but a little, that I am ſure: ſo, as I was ſaying, down came the horſe in Flinty-lane—he's ſpoiled, that's the truth of it, and he coſt forty guineas but laſt week; ſo this morning my maſter came into the

ſtable and found it all out, and turned me off at a minute's warning, and where to go, or what to do, I don't know. I have been all day at the King's Head, and they ſay I ſhan't ſtay there; I owe them enough already; they want to be paid, that's their cry: ſo I came to my mother, and ſo you ſee how ſhe uſes me." —Here Tom cried again.—"But I thought," ſaid James, "you ſaid you didn'nt mind loſing your place; is there any thing worſe? You hinted being in debt at the King's Head—I hope that is not true." —"Oh! yes it is," anſwered Tom.—"Why, didn't you receive your wages," ſaid James, "when you was diſcharged this morning?"—"Yes I did, to be ſure," ſaid Tom; "but our butler ſtopped it all for money I owed in the houſe, and I ſtill owe our footman ten ſhillings, beſides what I owe at the King's Head, and to the waſher-woman, and what I loſt at the revel laſt night; and John footman ſays he will be paid, and ſo I muſt part with my clothes, and I have none but what are on my back, and I don't know

know where to get more, nor where to lay my head; you ſaw mother turned me out."—"She has no where to put you, poor thing!" ſaid James—"Well, it is a ſad ſtory, indeed; but come along with me; father will take you for a night or ſo, I dare ſay, and we will think more about it to-morrow; ſo go make your mother's mind eaſy, and be friends with her, do."—"No, that I won't," anſwered Tom; "to keep aggravating a man ſo, when he is in diſtreſs; I'll not go near her."—"For ſhame!" ſaid James, "what, not be friends with your own mother; if ſhe did ſay a croſs thing or two ſhe had a very good right; and though it may not be quite kind to tell you of it, your diſtreſs is all of your own making."—"I won't go to her, though," ſaid Tom; "I know ſhe'll begin again."—"Then I won't take you home with me," returned James: *Curſed is he that ſetteth light by his father and his mother*, (Deut. ch. xxvii. ver. 16.) and I am ſure mine will have nothing to ſay to an undutiful ſon."—This had more weight with Tom

Lounger than any thing elſe which James could have ſaid; for if the Sagelys did not take him in, he was ſure nobody elſe would. With an ill grace enough did he wiſh his mother good-night, and added, that he was going to Sagely's; and ſhe, equally unkind to her ſon, only anſwered, "better luck than you deſerve."—"There! you heard, didn't you?" ſaid Tom, as he came out to James, who told him, he had no reaſon to complain of his mother, who had a great deal to be angry with him for never having helped her when he had plenty of money. At the phraſe "plenty of money," Tom ſhook his head.—"Why, you uſed to tell us ſo," ſaid James.—"So I did," anſwered he; "but I have been a ſad fool."—"Well then, now grow wiſe,," returned James, "and let us ſay no more about it."

James ran home a few minutes before him, to aſk his father and mother to take him in, to which they readily agreed, and to deſire them not to ſay any thing to vex him, which they promiſed they would not;

not; but it was with difficulty that Dame Sagely kept herſelf from hints, (as ſhe gave him ſome brown bread and beans for his ſupper, with a little ſmall beer) that ſhe feared he had been uſed to ſo much better things, that nothing would be good enough, and of how great a ſtranger he was grown at her houſe; but times were changed again. James begged her to forbear, and took Tom to his bed, where he never ſlept a wink; but kept conſidering what would become of him the next day. It luckily was harveſt time; farmer Thompſon wanted hands, and James promiſed to get him work, if he would work. —"But my debts!" cried Tom.—"I don't know what to ſay to them," ſaid James; "that's a bad ſtory."—"Why, I know," returned Tom, "you are careful, and have ſaved money; and as you have been ſuch a friend to me, if you will but go on, and lend me a trifle, I would pay you again as ſoon as I got another place."—"And ſo you are determined to go out again as a ſervant," interrupted James.—

"Yes,

"Yes, I am," ſaid Tom; "I am not uſed to labouring now, and I never ſhould like it."—"I am ſorry for you," ſaid James.—"Why ſorry? you will be ſurer of your money; for I will pay you the very firſt I get," cried Tom.—"I was not thinking of that," anſwered James; "for I am not going to lend you any: I am ſorry for you, becauſe I know now you will be undone in earneſt; you are ſo fond of diverſion and gaming, that if you live where you are tempted, you will never keep out of it."—"Well, you need not preach, if you won't lend your money keep it," ſaid Tom, "and ſee me go to jail; for there they ſwear they'll ſend me."—Poor James, whoſe heart was very tender, and who knew he had ſome little ſavings (though really not enough to repair the extravagance of Thomas Lounger), felt vexed at refuſing to aſſiſt him; but then again he reflected, that freſh misfortunes might come on, his parents be in diſtreſs and want it, and what ſhould he do then. Theſe thoughts diſturbed them both ſo much, that

they

they paſſed a moſt miſerable night; yet James alone had any claim to pity. Tom deſerved the ſorrow which he had brought upon himſelf, by want of duty to his maſter, and by idly ſquandering the wages he ought to have ſaved, or beſtowed on his poor mother. James's grief proceeded from the goodneſs of a heart that could not bear a fellow creature's diſtreſs, and from conquering the inclination he felt to relieve him, though he knew it would be wrong.

Next day Tom accompanied him to work, and James continued reſolutely to refuſe lending him that money, which it was his duty to reſerve for his parents: they kindly took in Tom at night, till it ſhould be ſeen what he could do. Farmer Thompſon fed him, and at the end of the week, by James's advice, he carried his wages in part of payment to the alehouſe, whither his friend accompanied him, that he might not be prevailed on to ſtay. Tom, who by this means found his pocket quite empty, could not be perſuaded by James to rejoice at being in an ho-

neſt way endeavouring to get clear in the world. He took on ſadly at being pennyleſs, and unable to viſit his old haunts, and more than once upbraided James for his hard hearted covetouſneſs, in refuſing to lend him money, "which he was ſo ſure to be repaid."—Poor James was greatly hurt at ſuch unmerited and ungrateful reproaches; but his conſcience acquitted him of covetouſneſs, and to return good for evil, was a leſſon he had early learned at the Sunday School. He felt that Tom's ingratitude was a grievous treſpaſs againſt him, who had and was ſtill diſpoſed to act ſo friendly a part; but then he knew that *if he forgave not thoſe that treſpaſſed againſt him, neither would his Heavenly Father forgive him his treſpaſſes*; and remembering who it was that ſaid, *Bleſs them that curſe you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that deſpitefully uſe you*, (Matt. ch. v. ver. 44.) he bore all Tom's unkindneſs patiently; but was of too firm a temper to ſuffer himſelf to be over-perſuaded into parting with that money which he deſigned

for

for the pious uſe of maintaining his parents in their approaching old age.

An accident, however, ſoon happened, which put it into James's power to prove to Tom Lounger that his temper, though prudent, was far from being covetous. One day, as the reapers were buſy in the field, a pretty little girl, without hat or cloak, and her whole apparel in tatters, from the brambles ſhe had caught againſt, flew by them like lightning, ſcreaming moſt piteouſly; ſhe was followed by a furious bull, and an elderly gentleman was ſeen on the other ſide of the hedge through which ſhe had made her way, wringing his hands in an agony of deſpair, and crying out to the labourers, for God's ſake to ſave his child. They all ſtared, frightened out of their ſenſes, and all too much alarmed to attempt her reſcue. At this moment the poor little girl's ſtrength forſook her; ſhe ſunk down upon the ground, and the bull, who had juſt overtaken, was about to toſs her, when James Sagely, who did not know what

fear

fear was; for one advantage of religion and knowledge is, that it gives courage, ſince thoſe who have read that not a ſparrow falls to the ground without the permiſſion of God, are ſure that he will not ſuffer his more noble creature, man, to be injured, more particularly when he is endeavouring to aſſiſt his neighbour. James then, to whom theſe thoughts were ever preſent, ſtruck the bull in the ſide with his reaping hook, which made the enraged animal turn to wreak his anger on him who had wounded him. James, who was as active as he was bold, contrived to eſcape from him ſeveral times, till getting in an advantageous ſituation to aim a blow at him, he gave the bull ſuch a cut acroſs the back ſinew of one of his hind legs, that he fell to the ground completely ham-ſtringed, and incapable of moving or doing any farther miſchief.

The gentleman had by this time caught his daughter in his arms, and was almoſt as wild with joy as he had before been with terror. "You have ſaved

my

my child's life, young man," ſaid he to James; "and I can never repay the obligation; but here are five guineas, and God bleſs you for your timely aſſiſtance, without which I ſhould have been the moſt wretched of men.—Oh! my dear Lucy," he added, kiſſing her pale cheek, "what would have been my miſery, had it not been for this brave fellow, whom I never can thank enough for ſaving you."—James bowed and bluſhed, and told the gentleman he did not deſerve the vaſt ſum he had been pleaſed to give him; for that he had done no more than any other man would have done in the ſame place.—"No," ſaid the gentleman, "here are a dozen in the ſame field, and but one dared riſk his life to ſave a poor innocent child, who was within a moment of being deſtroyed. Remember, young man, that my name is Elton, that I live at Highley, within two miles of this place, and that whatever you may want, I am ready to ſerve you; and now, my good friend, do help me to carry this dear girl home; for ſhe is too much terrified to walk."

walk."—James obeyed, and was detained ſo long, that he did not return home till the news of the accident, and of his reward, had reached his mother, who met him with joy for his good fortune; which Tom could not help envying, and to all the praiſe which his father and mother beſtowed on his courage, he only added this cold approval, that James ſtood in a good place, to be ſure, for hitting the bull, and that it was his good luck.—James was too generous to mention that they were within a yard of one another at the moment of the accident, and turned the converſation, by obſerving that he never ſaw any man ſo overjoyed as Mr. Elton was when he found his daughter was ſafe.—"What, was it rich Mr. Elton?" cried Tom; "your fortune is made then; for he is as rich as a Jew, and doats upon Miſs, who is his only child, as I heard when I lived at the Squire's."—"I don't know any thing of his being as rich as a Jew," replied James, "I am ſure he is as generous as a prince; but come into the garden, Tom; I want

you

you to help dig our potatoes."—"Not I," ſaid Tom; "I am tired enough working in that hot field all day."—"Don't be lazy, Tom; come when you are wanted man; I have ſome news for you," ſaid James, pulling him by the arm. Tom followed unwillingly, and was much ſurpriſed at ſeeing James pull out his treaſure, and at his ſaying at the ſame time, "Here, Tom, let me be told no more that I am covetous; for indeed I ſcorn it. I could not lend you what I did not conſider as my own; but this money, which came to me ſo unexpectedly, I think I may diſpoſe of as I pleaſe; ſo here are four of the guineas which were given me; the other muſt thatch our houſe againſt winter; it has wanted it very bad ſome time, and this comes juſt in time to keep the good old folks warm when cold weather comes—when you can pay me again, Tom, you ſhall; but mind I ſhall not hurry you about it—I hope you will now ſet yourſelf quite clear."—"Clear! aye, that's what it will," cried Tom; well, you are a good fellow at laſt—

thank

thank you, thank you kindly. Well, I'll go off to the King's Head this night, that's what I will."—"And only pay what you owe there, my friend; don't ſtay and run yourſelf into temptation," ſaid James.—"Come along with me yourſelf, Jem," ſaid Tom, "and ſee if I ſtay."—"No, no," returned James; "I muſt go talk to the good folks a bit; they will be full of their queſtions, I am ſure; but do you mind and come back directly."

Away went Tom with a merry heart; and James, who never kept ſecrets from his parents, went into the houſe again, to tell them how he had diſpoſed of his money. His mother was much inclined to blame him: Tom Lounger, ſhe ſaid, did not deſerve ſo much from him; "he would not have done the ſame by you, of that I am ſure:" ſhe added, "and as to your ever ſeeing a farthing of your money again, it is nonſenſe to expect it."—"I am afraid it is," ſaid James; "however I have given him a chance of getting right again, and that's a great comfort to me;

and

and I can't be ſaid to have loſt any thing, ſince a few hours ago I had no hope of having even the one guinea which now makes us ſo rich; and as to his not doing the ſame by me, there's no knowing that, unleſs he was tried, and even then, if he would not, you know, mother, another's doing wrong ſhould be no rule for us."—"Well, well, I ſay no more," ſaid his mother; "the money was your own; but I think I never knew you ſo fooliſh before."—"I don't ſay that neither, wife," ſaid Richard Sagely; "I don't ſay I ſhould have *adviſed* the boy to have given away his money ſo; I don't think *I* ſhould have had the heart to have done it; but I love thee the better for it, James, and God will love thee too—thou art a good lad."—"Aye, that he is," ſaid his mother, the tears ſtreaming down her cheeks for joy, "and a dutiful child too, and makes up for the loſs of my poor little ones; and may God Almighty bleſs him, one time or other, with as good a ſon in his old age as he is to us."—Theſe praiſes filled the honeſt heart of James

with

with the trueſt delight; to be a comfort to his parents, and to hear them expreſſing themſelves with ſuch affection towards him, was the higheſt gratification, and never did three people ſpend a happier evening than they did.

James began to wiſh he had not truſted Tom alone to the King's Head, and was ſorry to find it growing late, without his coming home: it was not till after the two good old people were gone to bed that he returned, apparently in liquor, which, though he had often been while he lived at the Squire's, had not happened before ſince he was a gueſt at the cottage. He was in the higheſt good humour, and, with many oaths, told James this was the luckieſt day that ever was for them both; that he had heard of a place; that he had met all his old friends; that John the footman would not have his money; but that he had inſiſted; ſo, not to affront him, John took it at laſt; that he was to call him the next day to go to * * * * races together, where they ſhould hear more of this place, which he was ſure of getting.

James did not attempt to reaſon with Tom at this time; for giving advice to a drunken man is truly caſting pearl before ſwine: reduced to the ſtate of a beaſt, ſuch a man cannot underſtand the difference between good and evil; and having loſt the uſe of reaſon, no reaſonable being will converſe with him.

James got him to bed as quietly as he could, and next morning told him he was ſorry for the ſtate in which he came home the night before; that had his father or mother ſeen him, they would have refuſed to let him be any longer their lodger; and that he hoped he would not only do ſo no more, but that he would give up his fooliſh ſcheme of the races.—"What, was I drunk laſt night?" aſked Tom; "I am ſure I have forgot it—well, 'twas excuſable, not having ſeen old friends ſo long; you know, one might be a little merry."—"Merry, do you call it?" ſaid James; "I hope we ſhall ſee no more ſuch mirth. Can you, in earneſt, call it being merry, or can there really be any pleaſure in getting into a ſtate in which

you may be guilty of all ſorts of crimes?"—"Crimes, truly!" ſaid Tom.—"Yes, crimes," repeated James; "for many a man in liquor has got into a quarrel and fought, and ſo been guilty of murder; but what you yourſelf did laſt night, was, I think, bad enough."—"Why, what did I do, pray?" cried Tom.—"Surely, you know that you ſwore very profanely," anſwered James, "and God, who has commanded that no one ſhall take his name in vain, will certainly puniſh thoſe who do."—"Come, come, don't be ſo grave," ſaid Tom; "I was a fool to get drunk, no good comes of it; but no ſuch bad as you would have me believe."—"Ah! Tom, I wiſh you would be a little graver," ſaid James, "though you laugh at me for being ſo: if you would read, you would find that I am right, and that *the drunkard and the glutton come to poverty*, (Prov. ch. xxiii. ver. 21.) There was a clever good book given us at the Sunday School about drunkenneſs, when I was a boy, and I am ſure you would be the better for reading it."—"I hope," cried

Tom,

Tom, "you would not have me go to the Sunday School now; a fine ſight it would be, to ſee a fellow ſix feet high, learning with the babies!"—"I don't quite ſay that I adviſe you to go," ſaid James; "for I dare ſay you would be too much aſhamed to profit by going; but I am poſitive that if you could conquer yourſelf and go, you would be the better for it all the days of your life. You need not laugh: I don't expect you to go, nor adviſe it; but this I do know, that you might learn if you would, without diſgracing yourſelf by going among the little ones too."—"What, I ſuppoſe," ſaid Tom, "you would be ſo wondrous good as to teach me."—"There is no joke that I can ſee," anſwered James, "in my being ready to do you ſuch a piece of ſervice: however, that was not what I meant. Children, I know, cannot teach themſelves; but I'll engage that any man who once knows his letters, and to ſpell words of one ſyllable, which you do, may in ſpare hours, when he is off his work, improve himſelf if he will;

ſo as to read, and learn his duty out of the Bible. Why, we Sunday ſcholars uſed to learn in the week days, alone, ready againſt Sunday came; and what a child can do, ſure a man may."—"I do well enough without ſuch vaſt learning, and I don't want your advice," replied Tom, very gruffly.—"I hope, though, you will ſo far take it," returned James, "as to give up this fooliſh ſcheme of going to the race; for it is quite wrong to think of it."—"No, I ſhan't, indeed," ſaid Tom; "I have promiſed John, and do you think I ſhall break my engagement for your preaching?"—"Do as you will then," anſwered James, angrily; "for I ſee advice is loſt upon you: John only wants your company, becauſe he knows you have got ſome money, and he hopes to win it of you."

Tom now flew into a violent paſſion, abuſed poor James in a moſt unfriendly manner, told him he ſuppoſed he thought he had a right to tutor him, becauſe he lent him money; but that he ſhould ſoon get a

place worth twenty pounds a year, and then he would pay him back his dirty money; that he did not think himſelf ſo mightily obliged as James ſuppoſed; that they had all ſaid at the King's Head laſt night, that Mr. Elton ought to have given the money amongſt all the reapers; it was only James's luck to ſtand near the bull; it might as well have been another as him; their *all* being in the field was what had ſaved the child; for if nobody had been there ſhe would have been killed; ſo they had *all* a right to the reward; and as to five guineas it was no ſuch mighty matter; Elton, who was ſo rich, might as well have given fifty; and then, if it had been divided, what James had lent him was no more than his ſhare.

James looked at Tom in ſilent aſtoniſhment at his ſtrange ingratitude; and feeling himſelf tempted to be immoderately angry, he hurried from him without returning any anſwer to the abſurdities he had juſt uttered; but before he got to the corn field where he was going to work, he repented of his anger towards

one who was really more an object of pity than of reſentment. Tom's extreme folly, in being perſuaded by the very ſilly argument he had heard at the alehouſe, that James had not acted generouſly towards him, was a clear proof that he would be led away again into all kinds of vice and extravagance, and that he was by no means a proper perſon to have any kind of connection with. James was vexed at having introduced him into his father's houſe, and was turning it in his mind how to tell him without unkindneſs, and without its ſeeming to ariſe merely from being affronted at his behaviour, that he wiſhed he would provide another lodging, when Tom ſaved him the trouble; for he did not come back that night, and the next day a girl came from the alehouſe to aſk for his things: from her the Sagelys learnt that he had got the place he had been after, was to go to it in a week, and in the mean time was to ſtay at the King's Head.

James was truly ſorry for this account, and when his

his mother ſometimes upbraided him with having flung away his money on a worthleſs fellow, he could only hang down his head and bluſh; but his father conſtantly comforted him by obſerving, that "he had meant for the beſt, and there's no helping the worſt." —James did not call on Tom during his ſtay at the King's Head; but he heard that at the race he had made ſeveral bets, and been ſucceſsful in them all; that the place he had got was a very good one; that he was to be a footman at Lord Rattle's, who was juſt going to be married, and was making fine liveries covered with ſilver lace; and that he was going to London, where are all ſorts of pleaſures and amuſements. All the young people who ſpoke of Tom envied his good fortune, excepting James, who was glad to find he was happy, though he feared it would not laſt long; becauſe he felt with grief that he did not deſerve happineſs, and he was ſorry to find that he did not think of calling on his poor mother, either to tell her of his good fortune, or to give her ſome

part of the money he had won; for though he had got it in a bad way, he ought to have turned it to a good uſe; and giving her a trifle before he left the country, was as much a duty as it would have been to have paid James what he owed him, which he did not do; but after ſpending ſeveral days in drinking and in idleneſs at the alehouſe, he left the pariſh without taking leave of any body.

James Sagely found, after Tom had left Welford, that he had made a joke of him at the alehouſe, for having lent him money, which he might have kept for himſelf, and that all the people who frequented the King's Head, conſidered him as a poor fool, whom it was eaſy to impoſe on; for it did not enter into their imaginations that the teſtimony of his conſcience, which told him he had done kindly, was any recompence to him for the loſs of the money; but happily there were many people in Welford, who, having a little more knowledge and good ſenſe than the idle ſet at the King's Head, admired his kindneſs,

though

though they blamed him for placing any dependence on ſo idle a fellow as Thomas Lounger. It ſo happened, by ſome way or other, that the ſtory came to the ears of Mr. Elton, who, ſome months after, happening to meet with James Sagely in one of his rides, ſtopped his horſe, and with a very grave countenance ſaid, "So, young man, you are ſuch a ſpendthrift, I find, that you gave away all the money I gave you ſome time ago; a ſum which might, I ſhould have ſuppoſed, have made the fortune of ſuch a one as you."—James coloured, and ſtammered out, that he was ſorry if he thought he had done wrong.—"To be ſure it was wrong," ſaid Mr. Elton; "I think you very ungrateful too, that you never have called at my houſe to aſk after me and my little girl."—"Indeed, Sir," ſaid James, "it was not from ingratitude; but I thought it would be taking too great a liberty, and that it would look as if I wanted more from you, who have already given me greatly more than I deſerved; and as to parting with your ge-

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nerous preſent in that fooliſh way, I did it, Sir, becauſe I thought it my duty to help a fellow creature in diſtreſs. I did not think ſo ill of the young man at that time as I do now; but even if I had known him to be not ſo good as he ſhould be, ſtill, Sir, he was in debt, and that is a ſad thing; ſo I can't be ſorry, Sir, though it has turned out ill: but (I beg your pardon, Sir,) though I cannot repent of having parted with the money, I am very ſorry you are diſpleaſed with me."—"I am not at all diſpleaſed with you, young man," ſaid Mr. Elton; "what I ſaid was to try you; I have heard a good character of you, and I find you deſerve it; but where was you brought up, pray? You ſpeak with propriety, and have defended yourſelf as you ought."—"I had the happineſs of being a Sunday ſcholar, Sir," anſwered James. —"You read then of courſe," ſaid Mr. Elton; "can you write?"—James told him that he could, though not very well; for that writing was not taught at the ſchool: but that he had, by copying

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the writing of one of his friends who went to a writing ſchool, and who had lent him his book, taught himſelf to write a legible though not a good hand."—"I ſhall not forget you," ſaid Mr. Elton, when he left him.

Some time after, James, who had long courted a neighbour's daughter, who as well as he had been a Sunday ſcholar, prevailed on his father and mother to let him marry, and take her home to their houſe; ſhe would help his mother, he ſaid, who grew old, and nurſe his father, whoſe health daily declined.—They had not been married many months when he had a meſſage from Mr. Elton to come to him directly. James obeyed, and was delighted to find that the buſineſs was, to tell him that there was a neat little cottage, furniſhed in a tidy manner, ready for him and his wife, upon Mr. Elton's eſtate; that there was a pretty piece of garden ground, and a field behind it, and a cow feeding in it, and all was for him, and no rent to be paid for the firſt two years; "after that,"

ſaid

ſaid Mr. Elton, "I ſhall expect you to be ſo far before-hand, as to afford to pay me regularly."—James's thankfulneſs was unbounded, as well it might be; but Mr. Elton ſaw there was ſtill ſomething wanting to his happineſs, and inſiſted upon knowing what was in his mind.—"Why to be ſure, Sir," ſaid James, "I ought not to ſcruple accepting your goodneſs, for it will be the making of my wife and me; but then, Sir, my father and mother are now got as much uſed to Kitty as they are to me, and I fear it will break their hearts to part with her."—"You did not think, I hope," ſaid Mr. Elton, "that I meant to part you: you ſhould not be my tenant, I can tell you, if I thought you would deſert your father and mother. The houſe will hold you all very well, and two or three children when you have them; ſo get a cart, and move all your family as faſt as you can."—James Sagely could now only thank Mr. Elton with bows and thankful looks; his heart was much too full to let him ſpeak;—and joyful news it was when he got

got home, and told his family of his great friend's extreme generoſity. They were ſoon ſettled in their new comfortable habitation.

In the courſe of a few years, Mr. Elton having an opportunity of knowing the induſtry and honeſty of James Sagely, he put him into a ſmall farm that happened to fall vacant upon his eſtate; and though he by no means excuſed him his rent (for it is a falſe kindneſs to the tenant, who is tempted in that caſe to think himſelf richer than he is, and prevents his feeling it neceſſary to exert all his induſtry, in order to be ready for quarter day; now, without a conſtant induſtry and care of every trifle, no man will ever thrive). Mr. Elton proved himſelf a real not an injudicious friend: he ſtocked Sagely's farm very completely; but told him that from that time forward he muſt ſhift for himſelf. Mr. Elton, nevertheleſs, aſſiſted him with advice; for he was himſelf an excellent farmer, and ſupplied him with ſuch books as were moſt likely to improve him in his buſineſs.

All

All James Sagely's ſpare time was employed in reading books upon farming, and ſuch as were likely to confirm him in the good courſe of life he was determined to lead. Before he was ſix and twenty, he found himſelf in a riſing way in the world, the father of two fine boys, and the huſband of a worthy neat young woman, who was as prudent as himſelf, and behaved with ſuch duty to the old man and woman, that they never thought they could praiſe her ſufficiently, and neither ſhe nor James ever paſſed a day without bleſſing the inventors of Sunday Schools; for to them they certainly owed their proſperity. Had there been no Sunday Schools, James would have probably remained in the ſame ignorant unimproved condition that poor Tom was; and though it is poſſible that he *might* have done Mr. Elton the ſervice of ſaving his daughter, though he had never been taught any thing, yet that gentleman would have thought he had acquitted himſelf very well by giving the five guineas. It was really to the good principles he had imbibed at

ſchool,

ſchool, that he owed his good fortune; *they* led him to make that uſe of the money which pleaſed Mr. Elton, and gave him a wiſh to know more of the young man who could act with ſuch generoſity: at the Sunday School too, James having been uſed to ſpeak to his ſuperiors, he had not that awkward baſhfulneſs which prevents many a worthy man from making his ſentiments known, when they are enquired into; he was equally free from pertneſs and boldneſs: the moſt reſpectful manner is perfectly conſiſtent with, and indeed always accompanies proper courage. He knew full well the vaſt diſtance which birth and education had placed between him and his ſuperiors; but knowing at the ſame time that, in the ſight of God, all men are equal, he felt, that in ſpeaking to the greateſt man in the kingdom, he was ſpeaking to a brother; but he conſidered him as a wiſer brother, to whom the ſame reſpectful deference was due as that from a child to a parent, who has a claim to both love and honour.

With

With ſentiments ſuch as theſe, James was humble, modeſt, yet manly in his behaviour, grateful for favours conferred on him, and at all times ready to acknowledge the obligations he felt. How different had been the behaviour of Tom, when, for his ſtation in life, James had acted quite as generouſly by him as Mr. Elton had towards himſelf. Tom's ſpirit was hurt by feeling himſelf under obligations, and his pride led him to think that he had had no more than his due, when in truth he deſerved nothing. The conduct of both was natural: ignorant people are uſually ſelfiſh and ungrateful, whilſt thoſe who have more knowledge are exactly the reverſe. James Sagely heard, from time to time, of Thomas Lounger; he had lived in twenty different places, and had often been turned away on account of drunkenneſs; he kept the moſt diſſolute company of London, and though his health was impaired by the life he led, he was thoughtleſs and happy to appearance; but *even in laughter the heart is ſorrowful, and the end of that*

mirth

mirth is heavineſs, (Prov. ch. xiv. ver. 13.) He dreſſed as well as his maſter, (for he was now grown to deſpiſe the livery which had once been the height of his ambition, and always wore his own clothes in his ſchemes of pleaſure); he was a well looking young man; all the girls admired him; and though he had broke the heart of one, who died of a decline, in conſequence of his having promiſed her marriage, and deceived her, Tom was not the leſs gay among his acquaintance, and unfeelingly uſed to wonder how Molly Truelove could ever believe him in earneſt, or ſuppoſe he would marry at his time of life, to be plagued with maintaining half a dozen crying brats. Tom never enquired after his old friends at Welford; his mother was dead almoſt of want, and it was reported that on her death-bed ſhe had left him a curſe inſtead of a bleſſing. Be that as it may, *the bleſſing of the father eſtabliſheth the houſes of the children, but the curſe of the mother rooteth out the foundations*, (Eccleſ. ch. iii. ver. 9.) She ſurely did wrong to carry ſuch an un-

 forgiving

giving ſpirit to her grave; but a parent's curſe hangs heavy over a child's head, and wretched muſt they be who think that a parent has received provocation to pronounce it againſt them. About James, Tom never thought at all, except when he entertained his companions at his expence. The ſtory of the four guineas was an excellent joke; and he would ſometimes end it with drinking James Sagely's health; "for after all, poor fool!" he would ſay, "that money of his ſet me a-going; I told him I had paid my debts with it; but I was not ſo ſoft as that neither. No, no, I knew better things; I did pay one or two troubleſome ones, and the reſt ſet me up. I gamed and I won, and have won all my life, one way or other, and ſo I ſhall to the end; ſo here's to Jem Sagely again, and I'll pay him when I am as great a fool as he is."

One Sunday evening, as James was taking a walk with his wife, he carrying the baby, and ſhe leading the other little thing who was juſt able to ſtep, a very

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ſhewy phaeton paſſed them, followed by four or five very ſmart ſervants, among whom Sagely thought he diſcovered his old acquaintance, Tom Lounger, and hallowed after him to ſtop. Tom had known him directly, but wiſhed to avoid him, and would not have ſtopped, if one of his fellow ſervants had not made him obſerve he was called. He accordingly turned, ſaying, "Do you want any thing with me, maſter?"—"Why, Tom," ſaid James, "don't you know me? How do you do? Sure you have not forgot your old acquaintance, Kitty Hearty, my wife that is now."—"Oh! you are married, are you? I think I do remember ſomething of you, your name is Sagely, isn't it?" ſaid Tom, pretending to be doubtful.—"You know me well enough," cried James; "however, juſt as you pleaſe; I don't think I ſhall eaſily forget you."—"Oh! ho!" ſaid Tom, "I know what you mean, though—to twit me with that money you lent me ſo long ago; but ſervants are not their own maſters; ſo I muſt follow mine."—And

away he galloped as hard as he could go, looking back and laughing at what he ſuppoſed was James's diſappointment; but *the triumphing of the wicked is ſhort*, (Job, ch. xx. ver. 5.) and in his opinion of farmer Sagely's wanting his money again, he was much miſtaken; he was not thinking of it at the time, and was much more able to have given him eight guineas than he was likely to aſk him for the four, which he had ſo long conſidered as quite loſt.

James and his wife both pitied and deſpiſed the poor unthinking fellow who had juſt left them; but little expected how near they were to feeling a ſtill deeper concern for him than ever they had before experienced. In leſs than a month after this meeting, farmer Sagely was ſurprized by a ſtranger's riding into his yard, and ſaying he had brought him a letter of conſequence from ——— jail, and he muſt come away with him directly. Mrs. Sagely was a little alarmed at this; but her huſband begged her to be compoſed whilſt he read the letter, which was as follows:

"DEAR JEMMY,

"I HAVE got a friend to write for me, to ſay "that I am in jail, in great diſtreſs. My enemies "have conſpired againſt me to take away my life; "but I am as innocent as a new born babe. I hope "you will come away directly, and ſpeak to my cha- "racter; for none of my falſe fellow ſervants will. I "am told you have had great luck in the world. I "heard this ſince I was here; ſo as you always was "my friend, I hope you will be ſo now, though I "was not quite ſo civil laſt time we met. I dare to "ſay you will forgive that, and come and help your "old loving friend,

"THOMAS LOUNGER."

Poor Farmer Sagely was much diſtreſſed what to do; not becauſe it was juſt harveſt time, and that it was particularly inconvenient to him to leave home; for he never ſuffered his own intereſt to interfere with the more material concerns of a fellow creature: be-

ſides, he knew, in this caſe, that his wife would ſee to a great deal, and her brother worked with him; ſo things would be ſafe, though it was not deſirable to be abſent at ſuch a time. His difficulty was, how to ſpeak to the character of one whom he really thought ill of; but then again, to refuſe to viſit the diſtreſſed in priſon, who requeſted his preſence too—it was a piece of cruelty he could not be guilty of. The trial, the man ſaid, was to come on the next day. ——— was not a whole day's ride; ſo by riding all night, after it was over, he ſhould be abſent but two compleat days from his family; and he felt he ſhould never forgive himſelf, if he refuſed to beſtow comfort where it was in his power to give it. He therefore determined at all events to go, though he did not ſee what uſe he could be of. As ſoon as the guide's horſe was reſted, they ſet off together; but James could gain but little intelligence from him. There was a riot, he ſaid, in an alehouſe ſome nights ago, and a man killed; that Tom Lounger was in com-

company, and was taken up; that it was aſſize time, and the trial to be the next day. This was all that farmer Sagely could gather from him; he knew no circumſtances, and he was forced to ride a long tedious journey, with the dreadful apprehenſions that his old acquaintance had been guilty of murder. They arrived at ——— by four in the morning, but no admittance could be gained into the priſon till ſix.

James Sagely, tired with riding all night, and harraſſed by the moſt diſmal thoughts, felt his heart die within him, as the jailor conducted him through dark paſſages to the cell where he found Tom in irons, dirty, pale, and looking wildly round him.—"Here's a gentleman wants to ſpeak with you," ſaid the jailor, as he opened the door.—"What gentleman?" cried Tom; "I have no friends; nobody comes near me."—"Don't ſay that," ſaid farmer Sagely; "I came the moment your meſſenger arrived, and truly ſorry I am, my poor friend, to ſee you here."—"And are you really come?" cried Tom; I hardly expected

you—and do you call me your friend too?"—"That I do, with all my heart," anſwered James; "and ſincerely wiſh I could do you any ſervice—tell me how I can."—"Why, ſpeak to my character," ſaid Tom, "to-day in the Hall; I know nobody in the town, and my fellow ſervants, three of them that were preſent, all turned againſt me;" and he curſed them for it. The farmer ſighed and was ſilent.—"What, won't you go with me to the Hall?" ſaid Tom; "and will you ſee your old acquaintance hanged, and all for want of ſaying one word? One word from you would ſave me, and you won't ſay it:" and the poor creature wrung his hands, and ſhrieked out, "I ſhall be hanged, I ſhall; I know I ſhall. I ſaw Molly Truelove in my ſleep laſt night, and then ſhe flitted away; and then the murdered man ſhook his head at me."—"Compoſe yourſelf, Tom," ſaid James, "and be more manly in your grief; don't fill your head with dreams and ſuch idle ſtuff; your conſcience troubles you, and no wonder

you

you have bad dreams; but there is no regard to be paid to them."—"No, nor to nothing in the world!" exclaimed Tom; "here are you come thirty or forty miles, and now you are here, won't go to the Hall with me and ſpeak."—"I have never ſaid I won't go," anſwered the farmer calmly; "but your ſuppoſing my going will ſave you, is an idle notion: I was not a witneſs of the ſad affair, and then what can I do?"—"No, you were not a witneſs; would to God you were. What would I not give for one of my ſide; but you can give me a good character, you know," added Tom; "and as they were all drunk, and have perjured themſelves, I am ſure the Judge will believe you; for you're a man of credit in the world. He'll believe you if you'll ſay I could not do it."—"Ah! Tom," ſaid Sagely; "it would be of no uſe againſt proof, even *if* I could give you a good character."—"*If!*" cried Tom wildly; "*if!* what won't you ſpeak a good word to ſave a man's life? Won't you ſpeak *one good word* for me?"—"It would

would be a very bad word," answered James, "for me to tell a lie. Do you consider, that I shall call God to witness of what I am going to say, and do you think I dare call him to hear me forswear myself? No, Tom; honestly I will do any thing to serve you; but as I would not tell a lie to save my own life, you can't suppose I will to save another man's. No, my poor friend, it is not likely I should be called upon; but if I am, I shall say very little."—"Don't call me your friend," said Tom; "you are no friend of mine; you are my enemy, and are come upon false pretences of friendship, and all to go into court to help take away my life."—"I won't go, if you don't choose it," said James; "I'll leave the town, if you wish it, directly; but you know it was you who sent for me yourself."—"Aye, aye, I believe I did," answered Tom; "I was half distracted, and so I am now, and so would you be too, if you expected you should die to-morrow."—"I hope not," thought James; but he was silent.—"They hang for murder

a few

a few hours after ſentence," continued Tom; "I ſhall be dead before to-morrow night; but it muſt not be, it cannot be: I can't think of dying; I never thought of dying in my life, and I won't die now."—"For God's ſake don't talk ſo wildly," interrupted James; "if you are not guilty you are in very little danger; truth will come out; and if you are ——"—"What do you talk of my being guilty for?" cried Tom: "I'll not plead guilty; the man can't come out of the ground and accuſe me, can he? I did not kill him any more than the reſt did; all were drunk, and it was no more I than another."—"Oh! God forgive him," exclaimed James, almoſt involuntarily.—"What do you call upon God to forgive me for?" ſaid Tom. "Why do you talk ſo ſhockingly? Do you call this comforting a man in affliction, to be calling to God to forgive him, as if you thought him in danger, and that any thing could be proved?"—"Poor, poor fellow! how I do pity thee," ſaid Sagely.—"I don't want your pity; what

good

good will it do me?" aſked Tom; "I want you to ſpeak for me, that's all. Do, dear Jemmy, ſpeak for me! think how we uſed to play together when we were boys; and do, pray do ſpeak for me!"—"I would if I could," anſwered the farmer; "but do try to compoſe yourſelf a little: if you behave in this ſtrange manner in Court, your own behaviour will condemn you, without farther evidence. Tell me, Tom, if you can, what all this has been about; I ſcarcely underſtand it."—"What, do you want to trap me into a confeſſion?" ſaid Tom: "no, I am not ſuch a fool as that neither; none but a fool pleads guilty, and I'll deny it to the laſt minute; don't I tell you we were all drunk, ſo I know no more of it than you do."—"Alas! I fear from your manner," ſaid Sagely, "that you are but too guilty; for God's ſake, Tom, don't add a ſolem falſehood to your other terrible faults; repent before it is too late; confeſs what you have done in Court; a free confeſſion, and true repentance, atones before God

for

for guilt: as you are young, and 'tis your firſt offence, that is, your firſt very very bad offence, perhaps the Judge may reſpite you, and who knows but it may pleaſe his Majeſty to pardon you; at leaſt, ſhould it be otherwiſe, you will not die with a lie in your mouth; and a greater than the King, God, who is all merciful, will forgive and receive you. Dear Tom, repent before it is too late—*there is more joy in Heaven over one ſinner that repenteth, than for ninety and nine juſt perſons, that need no repentance*, (St. Luke, ch. xv. ver. 7.) If you nobly acknowledge your error, and rather than give the Court an opportunity of convicting you, at once ſhew contrition for the ſin you have committed, I know, yes I am bold to ſay I am *ſure*, the merit will have weight before Almighty God, and *he* will have mercy on you, though men ſhould deny it you.—Oh! Tom, he is all good, all merciful to the truly penitent, *more ready to give than we to aſk*; turn to him and he will not turn away."—The farmer was proceeding vehemently; his whole heart

heart and ſoul were intereſted in the truths which he was pouring into an hardened ear, which refuſed to *hear the voice of the charmer, charm he never ſo wiſely*, (Pſalm lviii. ver. 5.) when Tom, who was not attending, interrupted him by ſaying, "I was thinking, James, that you are very ſtrong, and I am not much behind hand with you; ſo if you would help me, I think we might, together, knock off theſe irons; and then, if you would change clothes with me, I could eaſily get up the chimney, and when they come for *me*, and find *you*, they'll let you go; and when that buſtle is over, I'll come down in the night; it will be no difficult matter for me to get out of the window down into the ſtreet, and I could then ſteal away croſs the country: in your clothes nobody would know me, ſo I ſhould not be taken up, but would liſt with the firſt party I met: better be a ſoldier than be hanged."—James returned him no anſwer; he was hurt to the ſoul to find him ſo impenitent; he had not a doubt of his guilt, and too well

knew,

knew that his ſorrow was that he was taken, not that he had ſinned.—" If you are afraid," ſaid Tom, who ſeeing him ſilent thought he was irreſolute; " if you are afraid of what they will do to you; for having let me go, can't you ſay I had a piſtol in my pocket, and threatened to ſhoot you, if you did not help me out at window; or if that don't do, it will be an eaſy matter to invent ſomething, and keep them in play till night comes, and then I can ſo eaſily make my eſcape."—" I have already told you," replied James, " that I never tell lies; but even were it my cuſtom, a child would not believe ſo improbable a one."—Tom now curſed at and reviled him in the bittereſt terms; bid him get out of his ſight; ſaid he was only come to plague and diſtreſs him; and behaved much more like a madman than any thing elſe he could be compared to.

In unavailing efforts to ſoothe and bring him to a proper ſenſe of his guilt, did James Sagely paſs the melancholy hours till twelve o'clock, when the jailor came

came and called Thomas Lounger to the Court.—Sagely adviſed him to take ſome food by way of ſupport, and ſending for a bottle of wine and ſome bread, obliged him to eat, and drink a couple of glaſſes, not allowing him to ſwallow the quantity he wiſhed for, leſt it ſhould produce intoxication, and threatening to leave him the inſtant he drank a drop of the brandy he was perpetually aſking for, as he ſaid, to keep up his ſpirits.—Thomas, who, as the dreadful hour of trial drew on, was unwilling to be left by one whoſe kindneſs he was ſenſible of, though paſſion and pride made him miſuſe his friend, entreated James not to deſert him; and on that condition complied, and did not touch any ſtrong liquor. The worthy farmer accordingly accompanied him into Court, where, when it came to his turn to be tried, the fact was, as he feared it would be, moſt clearly proved againſt him.

Thomas Lounger and three of his fellow ſervants, together with many more young men, went to a public

public houſe, where, after drinking pretty freely, dice were produced; and Tom, who was always ſuſpected of playing unfairly, was proved to have cheated. The unfortunate man who was murdered, having loſt to him, ſaid he would have his money back, as it was not fairly won; and after ſome ſcuffling to wreſt it from him, in which he did not ſucceed, fighting was talked of; but all being againſt Lounger, who having drank in the morning, was more intoxicated than any of the reſt, it was agreed to turn him out of the room, and ſettle the matter the next day. This was accordingly done. He came down in great rage into the kitchen, ſwearing he would be revenged, called for more liquor, and having drank and ſwaggered about for ſome time, caught up a knife and ran up ſtairs again. The landlord fearing miſchief (which he was not in time to prevent) followed him, and ſaw him ſtab the man who had quarrelled with him, ſaying, "You coward! you won't fight *me*; but I'll fight *you*."—All the witneſſes agreed that he

certainly killed the man, when all the company were ſitting quiet, thinking him gone away; but that he was ſo drunk that he did not well know what he did; which, as the Judge very properly ſaid, was no excuſe, but rather an aggravation of his crime; ſince no man wantonly makes away with his reaſon by getting drunk, without previouſly knowing, that he may, in his temporary madneſs, be guilty of crimes, for which, in his ſober hours, it is highly juſt that he ſhould ſuffer puniſhment.—He was condemned to death, and fainted away on hearing his ſentence.

James Sagely accompanied him back to priſon, where, after many convulſive fits and faintings, he at length ſomewhat recovered; but only to exhibit a ſcene of agonizing terror that would have ſhocked the firmeſt mind. One while he cried like a child, the next he ſwore and raved like a madman; one moment he called upon God to have mercy on him, the next he wiſhed himſelf condemned to everlaſting puniſhment, with oaths and blaſphemies that made

the hearers ſhake with horror. In one of his calmer moments the worthy farmer, who was all aghaſt at his behaviour, begged him, for the love of God, and of his own ſoul, to call together his ſpirits, and endeavour to compoſe himſelf, ſo as to meet his fate in a more decent manner; and added, that he had ſeen Mr. Allright, the curate of Welford, in Court, and he was ſure he would come directly to him, pray by him, and conſole him in his laſt moments.—"I never talked with a parſon in my life," ſaid he; "I know nothing about praying, or about God."—"It is never too late," returned James; "let me prevail on you to ſee Mr. Allright, and to think a little ſeriouſly before you die."—"Die? how can I die?" ſhrieked Tom; "I am not fit to die; I never thought I ſhould die, till laſt night, and I have been mad ever ſince—Oh! Lord, Lord, to be cut off ſo in the prime of my life! Oh! Lord God, what ſhall I do!"—"Send for Mr. Allright, dear Tom," ſaid Sagely; "'tis all you now can do; the converſation

of ſo wiſe and ſo good a man will compoſe you."—"Well," ſaid Tom, "if you think ſeeing the parſon will do me any good, do go for him."

Farmer Sagely flew directly for Mr. Allright, who came without heſitation; but he was too wiſe and too honeſt, to beſtow much comfort on a man whoſe whole life had been ſpent in wilful neglect of every duty, and who felt no repentance for his ſins, though his dread of death of courſe gave him that ſorrow which to common obſervers bears the appearance of contrition for paſt offences: each ſhews itſelf by tears and terror; but they are moſt different ſenſations.

Mr. Allright had often preached upon the inefficacy of a death-bed repentance, which is ſeldom occaſioned by any thing but fear; it is not therefore to be ſuppoſed that he would ſo belie his opinions, as to promiſe eternal happineſs to one who ſeemed ſo utterly unworthy of it. Mr. Allright was, however, much too compaſſionate to add to his diſtreſs by

reproaches,

reproaches, which were now too late; he, therefore, merely joined with the farmer, in endeavouring to ſoothe him into a calmer ſtate of mind, and in aſſurances that the mercy of the Almighty being boundleſs, he might indulge hopes of pardon through the merits of his Redeemer, if he felt in his own heart a ſincere and earneſt repentance of his former life. —"I know nothing of what you mean by all this," ſaid Tom: "Sagely told me you would do me good; ſo I hoped you would try and ſave my life: and here you only talk what I don't underſtand. Who is my Redeemer?"—The Farmer ſhuddered, and Mr. Allright, looking up to Heaven, and claſping his hands together, exclaimed, "To be aſked this queſtion in a Chriſtian country! Oh! God have mercy upon him, and upon us, who have ſo neglected our fellow creatures—Young man," continued he, turning to Tom, "is it true that you are of Welford?"—Tom anſwering that he was,—"Merciful God!" once more exclaimed Mr. Allright.—James

now ſaw what was paſſing in the good man's mind, and ſeizing his hand, "Dear Sir," ſaid he, "you need not reproach yourſelf; you did all you could, and Tom uſed to go regularly to church one while, and might have liſtened if he would. Sure, Sir, you remember the boy in the brown waiſtcoat, that you have talked to many and many a time, and uſed to aſk us at ſchool, when you called, why he never came, for that you could get no anſwers from him yourſelf."—"What, is this Mary Lounger's ſon?" ſaid Mr. Allright; "he is ſo much altered I did not know him. Ah! poor creature, I am not ſurprized at thy end.—Alas! I remember I attended his mother's laſt moments."—"Did ſhe curſe me?" aſked Tom, eagerly; "but don't you tell me neither."—"I did hear a report of it," ſaid the farmer; "but I always hoped it was falſe."—"She made a moſt unchriſtian end," ſaid Mr. Allright; "may yours be better! I can't believe you are ſo very ignorant as you ſay you are."—"I don't know what

you

you call ignorance," ſaid Tom; "I never uſed to liſten at church, to be ſure, becauſe I found it dull, and did not underſtand it; but I am not more ignorant than another, I ſuppoſe. Sagely ſaid you would pray by me, and that would do me good; I wiſh you would begin if it will." Every word which this unhappy man ſpoke, ſerved but to increaſe the horror of his two kind friends, and to add to their conviction of the hardened ſtate of his heart.

After a long and moſt ſerious converſation, in which Tom interrupted Mr. Allright, by frequent marks of ignorance and irreligion, he at length gave him ſome notion of what is to be loſt by neglect of duty, and of the happineſs which might have been his, had he earlier attended to the advice of his friend. Tom was terrified at the clear ſight of the precipice on which he ſtood, and ſaid he was convinced there could be no mercy for him; ſo repentance was uſeleſs. "God forbid," returned Mr. Allright; "we have all need of repentance; and I have told you

what you may believe; for we have the word of Chriſt for it, that the mercy of the Almighty is extended to the worſt of ſinners."—"No, not to ſuch as me," cried Tom; "but why did ye come telling me ſuch horrid things to frighten me? Go, begone, both of ye, and leave me to myſelf—No, ſtay, ſtay; I can't be left alone neither; for Molly and the murdered man haunt me. Oh! don't leave me, don't; they will carry me to the devil before my time."—"We won't leave you," ſaid the farmer; "do but be more compoſed for our ſakes, and we will ſtay."—"Will you ſtay to the very laſt?" aſked Tom; "will you go with me to the fatal cart? (and he ſobbed like a child) that will be being a friend indeed; but you always was a friend to me, though I was ſo ungrateful. Can you forgive me?"—"That I do," ſaid James, crying bitterly; "and may God forgive you as freely as I do."—"Oh! Jemmy," ſaid Tom, "had I minded your advice, I had never come to this; you told me when I was a boy, that

gaming

gaming led to the gallows, and I wouldn't believe you —too ſure it does. Oh! that I could be a boy and begin again, and then I would go to ſchool, as you ſaid to me over and over (but I didn't mind), and learn and lead a new life—but there is no time left now—it is all paſt, all over with me, and here they come to fetch me."—He ſcreamed, and tore his hair, as he uttered theſe words. Lounger was right: the fatal hour was arrived, and he was forced to go; though his wild ſtruggles and mad behaviour obliged the people to carry, more than to conduct him to the place of execution, whither Mr. Allright and Sagely attended him, to fulfil the dreadful promiſe they had made.

James's heart bled to ſee the crowds of people who flocked to ſee his friend's diſgrace, whoſe death was a ſight for the idle, and an amuſement for the unfeeling. James had often wondered how it was poſſible for human creatures to run to an execution as to a place of diverſion, as too many of the lower ſort of

people

people are apt to do. This was the firſt at which he had ever aſſiſted, and it may well be believed was the laſt.

When all was over, with an aching heart, and a trembling body, he took his way again to his own peaceful dwelling, without returning into the town where he had paſſed the moſt wretched hours of his life: his good friend, Mr. Allright, thinking him too much hurried to be left alone, rode home with him. They travelled in ſilence for ſome hours, being both too deeply affected to wiſh for converſation. The farmer was the firſt who ſpoke:—"Poor Tom!" ſaid he, as he went down Flinty-lane, "here was the beginning of thy misfortunes; the accident to the Squire's horſe happened here. I do think if he had lived on in the country, all this would not have happened; but that ſad place, London ——"—"London," interrupted Mr. Allright, "was not the occaſion of this young man's ruin; and I am ſure, farmer, on ſecond thoughts, you will allow, that a pure mind

may

may keep itſelf untainted in the midſt of vice. I grant you, that London is full of temptations, to which he yielded; and how could it be otherwiſe? Lounger had never ſteeled his heart againſt any attack; he neglected every opportunity of learning; he rejected every admonition to virtue, and would have been juſt as wicked in a village as he was in a town; he had never been in London, I think, when he carried off your money."—"Very true," ſaid Sagely; "he was bad very young, indeed. Poor, poor fellow! Do you think, Sir, can you think there are any hopes for him? I dread your anſwer?"—"Alas! my good friend," anſwered Mr. Allright, "it is hard for us to judge of the extent of mercy of our God; we know it is great; but ſo is his juſtice: you and I cannot dive into a man's heart, to judge whether his repentance be ſincere—there were no ſigns of any."—"I thought ſo too," whiſpered the farmer, in a low voice; and another ſilence enſued till they reached home, where Mr. Allright accepted of a bed; and

was ſo well pleaſed with the manners of his worthy landlord and his family, that he was ever after a frequent viſitor and firm friend to Farmer Sagely, who was ſome time before he quite recovered his ſpirits, and never could bear to hear the name of Tom Lounger, or any of the circumſtances of his ſtory, mentioned in his preſence; but a good conſcience, and the ſight of a happy family round him, were too chearing for him long to indulge melancholy thoughts. There is not at this moment a happier man living, than James Sagely; he is ſurrounded by a large family of children, ſome of them grown up and ſettled, who all love and honour him; he is reſpected by rich and poor in his neighbourhood; for he ſpends his life in acts of kindneſs and benevolence; the creditable neighbours all find a hearty welcome at his hoſpitable board, and the poor ones relief from his charity; and at his death it may be ſafely conjectured, that there will not be a dry eye amongſt thoſe who know him.

It is not meant that the young people who read this ſtory, ſhould imagine that all lads who attend Sunday Schools will come to be farmers, nor that all thoſe who go to ſervice, or are ignorant of reading, will be hanged; this would be an abſurd fancy: nor is to be expected, though it may be wiſhed, that all Sunday Scholars will turn out as well as they ought to do, and may, if they attend to the inſtructions they have there an opportunity of receiving. Among the many thouſands who (thanks to the eſtabliſhers of the plan) receive their education at Sunday Schools, there muſt be all ſorts of characters, and it is to be feared there are ſome who will not anſwer to the wiſhes of their teachers; but it would be ſad indeed, if, among the *moſt* ignorant poor, there were not *ſome* honeſt worthy characters. Knowledge is commonly the parent of virtue, and ignorance that of vice; but when we meet with exceptions (as we certainly ſhall) to this general rule, we are not to imagine, that ſchools and knowledge are uſeleſs, becauſe they do not make *all*

who come to them wiſe and happy: they can only put young people in the way of being ſo, and give them a chance which every one muſt improve for himſelf; and as it can do no harm to learn, and may do good, ſurely we may pronounce thoſe fools, who are not willing to beſtow a few hours once in a week, to try whether they may not be the better and happier for learning what ſo many good people take ſo much trouble, and beſtow ſo much time and money in endeavouring to teach them. In the loweſt ſtation, reading will be found a pleaſure and a comfort; and it is a ſtep towards behaving with credit in a higher rank of life, if by induſtry and honeſt endeavours, a poor boy ſhould riſe to the ſituation of our friend James Sagely.

After a very little application, thoſe who are willing to learn, will find, with pleaſure, that knowledge improves the heart as well as the underſtanding; and he who has been taught what religion is, what are its comforts *here*, and its proſpects *hereafter*, will be

ſurely

ſurely leſs ready to fall into errors which muſt deſtroy his beſt hopes, than he who, like Tom Lounger in the ſtory, though he goes to church, does not liſten, becauſe it is dull, and he don't underſtand it.

He that hath ears to hear let him hear, ſays our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt; let us not then miſapply the talents beſtowed upon us by Almighty God; but by due attention improve the underſtanding which raiſes us above the brute creation, and which was given to enable us to obey the laws of the goſpel, which in this happy country (where we cannot be too thankful for being born) is preached to the poor, and explained to the young; ſo that ignorance and its companion, ſin, remain without excuſe.

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